

# Booming

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Objective: To prevent oil from contacting resources at risk, and to facilitate oil removal.

Description: A boom specially designed for pollution response is a floating, physical barrier, placed on the water to contain, divert, deflect, or exclude oil. Containment is deploying a boom to contain and concentrate the oil until it can be removed. Deflection is moving oil away from sensitive areas. Diversion is moving oil toward recovery sites that have slower flow, better access, etc. Exclusion is placing boom to prevent oil from reaching sensitive areas. Booms must be properly deployed and maintained, including removing accumulated debris.

Applicable Habitat Types: Can be used on all water environments (weather permitting). Booms begin to fail by entrainment when the effective current or towing speed exceeds 0.7 knots perpendicular to the boom. Waves, wind, debris, and ice contribute to boom failure.

When to Use: When preventing oil from contacting sensitive resources is important. Most responses to spills on water involve deploying boom to help remove floating oil. Containment booming of gasoline spills is usually not attempted, because of fire, explosion, and inhalation hazards. However, when public health is at risk, gasoline can be boomed if foam is applied and extreme safety procedures are used.

## Booming (cont.)

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- Biological Constraints: Placing and maintaining boom and anchoring points should not cause excessive physical disruption to the environment, and both must be maintained so they do not fail nor tangle and cause more damage. Vehicle and foot traffic to and from boom sites should not disturb wildlife unreasonably, and booms in very shallow water should be monitored so they do not trap wildlife (such as migrating turtles returning to sea or fish coming in at high tide).
- Environmental Effects: Minimal, if disturbance during deployment and maintenance is controlled.
- Waste Generation: Cleaning booms will generate contaminated wastewater that must be collected, treated, and disposed of appropriately. Discarded booms will need to be disposed of according to appropriate waste disposal regulations.